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INTELLIGENCE REPORT
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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP

INTELLIGENCE REPORT

COUNTRY Turkey

SUBJECT Caferoglu's Article on the Ethnological
Origin of the Black Sea Coast Population

DATE:

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PAGES 2

SUPPLEMENT

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25X1A ORIGIN

1. A rather curious incident on the subject of the race and origin of the population inhabiting the area of the Black Sea littoral from Sinop east has taken place between two Turkish university professors at a time when such a controversy could be utilized by the Soviets in their propaganda regarding this area. It will be recalled that not long ago certain Georgian university professors published their own theories in connection with the populations of this section of Turkey.
2. The incident in question occurred between Professor Ahmet Caferoglu (a native of Azerbaijan and Professor at the University of Istanbul), and the well known Orientalist, Ismail Hani Danismend. Professor Caferoglu published in April 1946 an article in Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı Dergisi, a publication of the University of Istanbul, wherein he claims that the population inhabiting the provinces of Rize, Trabzon, Giresun and Ordu, on the Black Sea littoral, are not of Turkish but of Greek ethnological origin. Because of the prominence of the author, the article created a considerable sensation. The general feeling resulting from this publication gradually died down, and the article retained a purely academic significance. With the reopening of the University, and following the recent granting of autonomy to the University, the matter has again come to light.
3. Professor Siddik Sami Onak, Dean of the University, has ordered an investigation on the subject and plans to submit the article in question to a committee of experts at the University, in order to determine the issue from an historic and racial viewpoint. Thus far, Professor Caferoglu has had among the University members and members of the People's Party the reputation of being a Turkish nationalist, having fled to Turkey from Russian Azerbaijan in order to escape the Soviets, as well as having been a member of the true Turkish community of that province. However, his articles on racial origin in this area gave a different picture altogether. Aside from these articles, he is today strongly criticized for not having learned the pure Turkish spoken in Turkey instead of retaining the Turkish dialect spoken in Azerbaijan.
4. It is feared that the Soviets may exploit this article and the opinions expressed by Professor Caferoglu in order to substantiate their own thesis that the populations of the Black Sea littoral are not of Turkish race, but constitute a foreign element. This is, it will be recalled, the very basis of the claim of the Georgian professors. The Izvestiya article by the Georgian professors was broadcast to Turkey and to other parts of the world by the Russian radio propaganda service.

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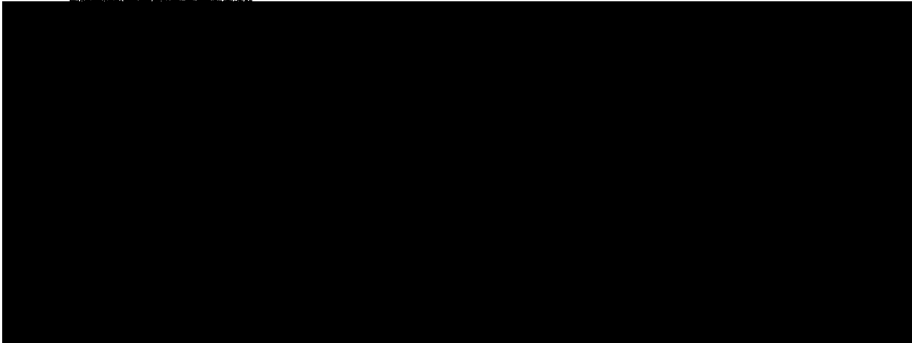
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5. The principal opponent of Professor Caferoğlu is a well known Orientalist, Professor Ismail Hani Danismend, whose recent statements are aimed at refuting the historic thesis of Professor Caferoğlu. Professor Danismend claims that Caferoğlu's opinions are not based on any scientific evidence, and attacks him for never having devoted himself to the study of the linguistic problem, without which it would be impossible to establish the real origin of the populations. Professor Caferoğlu is also accused of merely having expressed a superficial opinion in line with that of the Georgian professors.
6. "The Students Association of the Black Sea of ¹⁹May 1919", established several years ago by students coming from the Black Sea area to commemorate the day on which Mustafa Kemal Atatürk landed at Samsun, held a meeting to discuss the Caferoğlu incident. A group of these students called on the President of the University, suggesting that a committee of experts be charged with studying the article and making reports thereon, and that action be taken against Caferoğlu. Professor Caferoğlu has thus far replied only by requesting that the scope of his article be limited strictly to the scientific and documentary domain and that it not be given a political significance. This request, however, was immediately attacked by a number of opposing professors.
7. It is believed in certain university circles that Professor Caferoğlu will be dismissed from the University and that some semi-official articles will appear explaining that the present population of the Black Sea littoral is racially of pure Turkish origin.

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